

# **MTC Public Participation Plan**

## **Appendix A**

### **A Public Participation Plan for the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan**

**D R A F T**  
July 2, 2010



**A Public Participation Plan for the  
Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy and  
Regional Transportation Plan**

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# **A Public Participation Plan for the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan**

## **I. Introduction**

California Senate Bill 375 (2008) aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through development of a Sustainable Communities Strategy, or SCS, which integrates transportation and land-use planning. It's a tall order, but it's also an opportunity to leave our nine-county San Francisco Bay Area in better shape for future generations. In addition to seeking to achieve a new state greenhouse gas target, the Bay Area must also continue to work together to accommodate anticipated population growth while keeping the region affordable for our residents, preserve open spaces, protect our environment, and get our residents where they need to go, when they need to get there.

The law calls upon the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to develop a plan to involve the public in this process, which is detailed on the following pages. This plan is rooted in the principles that are included in MTC's federally required Public Participation Plan (to which this plan is appended). The goal is to promote an open, transparent process that encourages the ongoing and active participation of local governments and a broad range of stakeholders.

In developing the Bay Area's SCS, MTC and ABAG will team with two partner regional agencies — the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) — to integrate transportation and land use planning with clean air and shoreline planning. Developing the Bay Area's SCS will involve working together with local governments, county congestion management agencies, public transit agencies, along with business and community groups, nonprofits, stakeholders and interested residents to ensure that those with a stake in the outcome have the opportunity to be involved. We invite all Bay Area residents to join in the dialogue to make our region a better, more sustainable place.

## **One Bay Area**

The four regional agencies — ABAG, the Air District, BCDC and MTC — each have a number of separate initiatives under way toward the goal of creating a more sustainable and livable Bay Region. To connect these efforts, a single, unifying campaign has been developed — OneBayArea. A single web portal, [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org), provides the public with ready access to information about the joint efforts of the four agencies. Information on the Sustainable Communities Strategy is located there. To learn more and get involved, visit the [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org) site. Interested participants are encouraged to sign up to receive updates, get meeting schedules and materials and otherwise keep up to date on progress toward a sustainable Bay Area.

## **Planning Basics**

ABAG and MTC's current land use and transportation planning efforts include three key elements, which now must be woven together under SB 375.

**Projections** — ABAG prepares 25-year long-term forecasts for population, housing and employment for the region, known as Projections. These policy-based projections inform the development of required housing and transportation planning efforts.

**Regional Housing Need Allocation** — ABAG also coordinates the state-mandated Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) process. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) determines the region's overall housing need, then ABAG is responsible for distributing to local governments their share of housing units, including affordable units, that the Bay Area should plan for in order to accommodate future growth.

**Regional Transportation Plan** — A long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is prepared and adopted by MTC every four years, taking into account population, housing and employment forecasts and the regional housing allocation process. The Regional Transportation Plan must be a financially viable plan, and also conform with clean air goals. Under SB 375, the RTP must include the Sustainable Communities Strategy for achieving the regional target for reducing greenhouse gases. (In cases where it is determined that the target cannot be achieved, an alternative planning strategy will be developed.) The RTP is slated for adoption by the spring of 2013, upon expiration of the current long-range plan, the Transportation 2035 Plan.

**Other Key Initiatives** — A number of other ongoing initiatives will also help shape development of the SCS. The FOCUS program is the regional land-use blueprint plan lead by ABAG and MTC to support voluntary, incentive-based efforts to direct development toward a more compact land use pattern for the Bay Area. Through FOCUS, local governments and regional agencies are encouraging the development of complete, livable communities in areas served by transit, and promoting conservation of the region’s most significant resource lands. MTC’s recently launched Transit Sustainability Project to ensure the long-term viability of the region’s public transit network will also help inform the SCS. Other relevant initiatives include MTC’s Climate Initiatives Program; BCDC and ABAG’s climate adaptation work to address the impacts of sea-level rise; and environmental review guidelines under consideration by the Air District to address health-based concerns over impacts of new development in certain low-income communities near transportation hubs.

## Sustainable Communities Strategy Work Plan

The main work elements of the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan will be led by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments, with support from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission.

| 2010  | 2011   | 2012  | 2013  |
|---|--|---|---|
|   |  |   | <i>Spring</i>   |
| <b>FOUNDATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect information</li> <li>Build and refine forecasting models</li> <li>Approve goals</li> <li>Develop targets                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GHG target</li> <li>Housing/Jobs target</li> <li>Other performance targets</li> </ul> </li> <li>Develop public participation plan</li> <li>Engage local government partners and a broad range of stakeholders</li> </ul> | <b>Targets/Goals</b><br><b>CONSTRUCTION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify Projections 2009 Base Case (population, housing, employment forecasts)</li> <li>Develop/ evaluate alternative scenarios (or packages) of land-use patterns and transportation measures and policies</li> <li>Begin Regional Housing Need Allocation Process</li> </ul> | <b>Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy</b><br><b>INTEGRATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Regional Housing Need Allocation</li> <li>Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy</li> <li>Draft transportation investment plan (RTP)</li> <li>Evaluate performance of each toward reaching targets; refine, revise</li> <li><b>Adopt Regional Housing Need Allocation</b></li> <li>Complete associated environmental impact reviews (EIR)</li> </ul> | <b>Review and Adoption of Final Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sustainable Communities Strategy</b></li> <li><b>Regional Transportation Plan</b></li> <li><b>Alternative Planning Strategy (if necessary)</b></li> </ul> |
| <b>Ongoing public and local government engagement</b>   |  |   |   |

## **II. Government Engagement**

In developing the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy, the regional agencies will involve both government and non-government agencies, organizations and individuals. A partnership with local governments — from elected officials to city managers, planning and public works directors, transit operators and congestion management agencies — is critical because without local government involvement, a regional strategy will not be attainable.

To launch the planning process for the Bay Area's development of a Sustainable Communities Strategy, a half-day local government summit was held on April 22, 2010, in Oakland. Local elected officials received a briefing on the requirements of Senate Bill 375 and an introduction to the planning process the Bay Area will utilize to develop the Strategy. The summit was held in conjunction with the Association of Bay Area Governments' spring General Assembly, and drew over 350 attendees. The audience included a roughly equal representation of local elected officials, government staff, and representatives from a range of interest groups (business, environment and social equity).

### **County/Corridor Meetings**

To involve local governments and transportation agencies, meetings will be organized to lead discussions in each county and/or, in certain cases, along major travel routes/corridors. In the summer of 2010, the regional agencies, in coordination with congestion management agencies, will convene county-level meetings in each of the nine Bay Area counties with elected leaders to determine how best to bring local government participants together in their respective counties to undertake this task.

The congestion management agencies will then host the follow-up meetings — which will likely vary by county and may be based on corridors or other sub-regions — to work with the regional agencies in assigning growth. These working groups will continue with participation from city and county planning and public works directors, transit operators, as well as staff from the congestion management agencies and the four regional agencies.

### **SCS Executive Working Group**

An SCS Executive Working Group — including city managers, congestion management agency directors, regional agency executives, transit officials and others — will be formed to provide a forum for input on technical and policy issues surrounding the SCS. Executive Working Group meeting times/locations as well as meeting materials will be posted on the OneBayArea website.

### **Regional Advisory Working Group**

Local government staff and Bay Area stakeholders will meet jointly through the newly created ad hoc Regional Advisory Working Group, to provide input to regional agency staff during the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Working Group includes staff representatives from the four regional agencies, local government, county Congestion Management Agencies, transit agencies, and stakeholder representatives. Meeting times and locations as well as meeting materials will be posted on the OneBayArea website. (More information can be found in Section III, titled Participation via Policy and Advisory Committees.)

### **Additional Outreach to Government**

In addition to the local governments that will be involved in development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, MTC and ABAG will consult with officials responsible for other types of planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area, such as federal and state conservation and historic preservation agencies. Consultation will be based on the agency's needs and interests. At a minimum, agencies will be informed about the process to develop the SCS and RTP, and will be provided an opportunity to participate.

Consultation with the region's Native American governments also will occur. There are six federally recognized Native American tribes in the San Francisco Bay Area. MTC and ABAG will invite the tribes to participate in government-to-government consultation during development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Regional Transportation Plan. The groundwork for consultation will occur early in the process of developing the regional transportation plan, and will include a "Tribal summit" for all six Tribal governments. MTC and ABAG will also conduct individual meetings at the tribe's convenience. (See also Tribal Government Consultation in the MTC Public Participation Plan.)

### **Local Government Input on Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy**

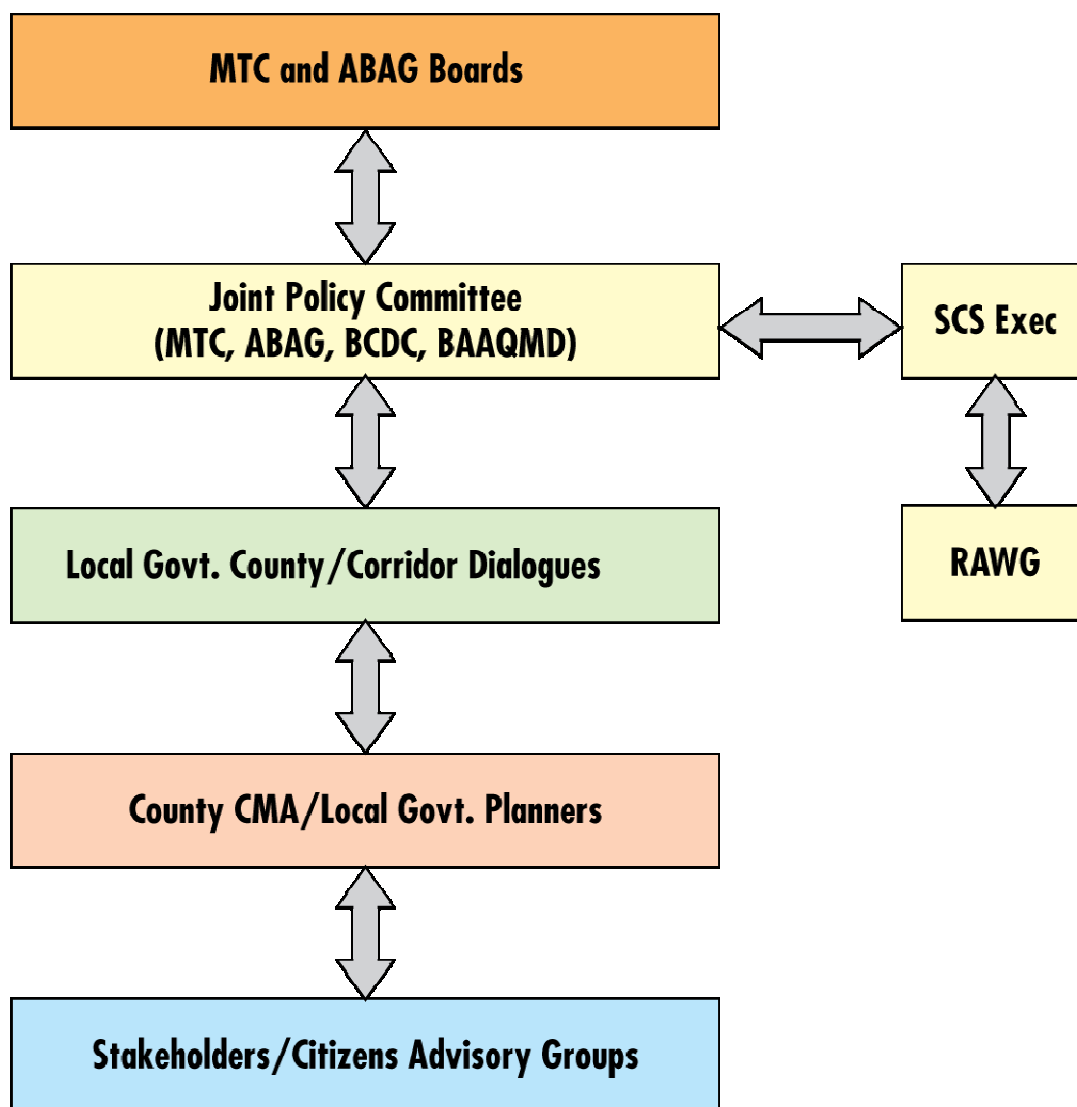
As required by SB 375 legislation, at least two informational meetings in each county will be held for members of the county board of supervisors and city councils, to review and discuss the Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy and consider their input and recommendations. Notice of the meeting shall be sent to each city clerk and to the clerk of the board of supervisors. One informational meeting will be conducted if attendance at the one meeting includes county board of supervisors and city council members representing a majority of the cities representing a majority of the population in the incorporated areas of that county. ABAG and MTC will strive for a robust engagement with local governments that may well go beyond the number of meetings prescribed in the legislation.



### III. Participation via Policy and Advisory Committees

Participation in regularly scheduled meetings of advisory and policy committees is one way that interested stakeholders — whether government or non-government — can get and stay involved. Meeting times and locations for these meetings will be posted on the OneBayArea website. If unable to attend, stakeholders can find meeting materials at the OneBayArea website ([www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org)) as well. The diagram below depicts the partnership that will be required to develop a successful sustainable strategy for the region.

#### A Partnership with Local Government/Stakeholders/General Public



## Policy Boards and Committees

**The Joint Policy Committee** brings together board members of the four regional agencies (ABAG, MTC, the Air District and BCDC) and is the vehicle through which the agencies coordinate their regional planning efforts. This committee will provide oversight of the Sustainable Communities Strategy planning effort. The Joint Policy Committee meets every other month at 10 a.m. in Oakland, in the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter.

At key points in the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the full policy boards of the four agencies will discuss SCS issues at their regular board meetings. Final decisions and actions related to the SCS will be made by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Executive Board of the Association of Bay Area Governments.

**MTC** is guided by a 19-member policy board composed of local officials from the nine Bay Area counties, including two members who represent regional agencies — ABAG and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission — as well as three nonvoting members appointed to represent the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the California Department of Transportation. The Commission meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at approximately 10 a.m., at MTC's offices in Oakland, in the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter.

**The ABAG Executive Board** carries out policies established by the General Assembly, which is composed of representatives of the Bay Area's 101 cities, towns, and counties. ABAG's Executive Board makes operating decisions and controls expenditures, and acts on recommendations from other Association committees. The 38 voting memberships on the Executive Board include elected officials reflecting population size of the nine counties, with non-voting members representing state or federal agencies invited to serve at the pleasure of the Board. The Executive Committee meets the third Thursday of every other month, beginning in January, at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter.

To more fully collaborate, the MTC Planning Committee and ABAG's Administrative Committee will meet jointly as needed to oversee development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

## Advisory Committees

**The Regional Advisory Working Group:** Bay Area residents and government staff will meet jointly through a newly created *ad hoc* regional working group whose primary purpose is to provide input to regional agency staff throughout the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy. The Regional Advisory Working Group will meet as needed. For example, during 2010, the Regional Advisory Working Group is expected to meet almost monthly during the April – December 2010 timeframe, and participants will be asked to offer feedback on regional targets, including regional housing and job targets, the “base-case” or starting point land use, alternative land use and transportation investment scenarios, and SCS-related public outreach.

The Regional Advisory Working Group will include planning staff representatives of local government, county Congestion Management Agencies, transit agencies, and stakeholder representatives. Each county is represented by at least one local planning director; representatives of various stakeholder groups (including affordable housing, business, real estate developers, equity and environmental groups) were invited to participate as well. Meetings will be posted on the OneBayArea website and are open to all government staff and members of the public.

**Existing MTC and ABAG advisory committees** will be utilized to garner additional input from various stakeholders. These include MTC’s Policy Advisory Council and ABAG’s Regional Planning Committee.

- **MTC’s Policy Advisory Council** is a 27-seat advisory panel established to advise MTC on transportation policies in the San Francisco Bay Area, incorporating diverse perspectives relating to the environment, the economy and social equity. This panel will be an active participant in the development of the SCS by providing input on regional planning efforts linking transportation, housing and land use plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Policy Advisory Council meets monthly, on the second Wednesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at MTC’s offices in the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter, Oakland.
- **The ABAG Regional Planning Committee** hears Bay Area planning issues of regional concern and makes recommendations to the ABAG Executive Board. The Regional Planning Committee includes 36 members, with a minimum of 18 elected officials from the nine Bay Area Counties, representatives of the four regional agencies, and stakeholders representing a broad range of issues, including business, economic development,

recreation/open space, environment, public interest, housing, and labor, as well as representatives from ethnic minority groups and special districts. The Regional Planning Committee meets the first Wednesday; alternate months, from 1-3 p.m. in the MetroCenter Auditorium, in Oakland.

## IV. Stakeholders

The regional agencies will seek the active participation of a broad range of stakeholder groups in the development of the Sustainable Communities Strategy. In addition to bringing together representatives of local government, county congestion management agencies, transit agencies and the four regional agencies as described in Section II, outreach efforts will encourage the participation of a broad range of public advocates and stakeholders. We will pay special attention to engagement efforts that focus on under-represented communities who do not typically participate in regional and local planning. The success of the SCS is dependent on all voices in the region being represented and involved, including stakeholders that are specifically identified in SB 375 and in federal legislation that governs regional transportation planning, including:

- Other affected public agencies (such as special districts, county health officers, resource agencies, etc.)
- Transportation and environmental advocates
- Neighborhood and community groups
- Broad-based business organizations
- Affordable housing advocates, home builder representatives, homeowner associations
- Landowners, commercial property interests
- Low-income communities, communities of color and limited English proficient communities
- Other interested opinion leaders, advocacy groups and the general public.

## V. Public Participation Techniques

Development of the Bay Area's Sustainable Communities Strategy will occur in four phases, as described in the Work Plan in Introduction Section. Public participation efforts for each phase will be developed in advance of each, and posted on [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org). Detail for Phase One is described in Figure 1 below, Planning Process Chart. Throughout each phase, ABAG and MTC will use a variety of participation techniques to engage a wide range of residents.

### ***Voices from Underserved Communities***

The success of the Sustainable Communities Strategy is dependent on all voices in the region being represented and involved. MTC and ABAG will take special effort to engage minority and low-income residents that do not typically participate in regional government planning efforts, and to work with social equity advocates to frame regional policies and investment guidelines that can result in equitable development.

ABAG and Breakthrough Communities (a non-profit project based in Oakland), with support from MTC, submitted a transportation planning grant for funds from the California Department of Transportation to assist in engaging these special populations. The funds would allow for a more robust public engagement process in this area. Selection of the grant recipients won't be known until mid-2010.

### ***Participation Techniques***

To the extent that funding allows, the public participation efforts will include:

#### **Advance Notice**

- Develop details for the planning process in advance of each phase of the SCS development — including details and opportunities for public engagement — and post a detailed Planning Process Chart on [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org).
- Maintain an updated calendar of events on the OneBayArea website, accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Provide timely notice about upcoming meetings. Post agendas and meeting materials on the web one-week in advance of policy committee meetings or ad hoc advisory group meetings
- Use a mailing list database to keep participants notified throughout the multi-year process (via e-mail or U.S. mail)

- Circulate a Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy or Alternative Planning Strategy, if one is prepared, for public review at least 55 days before the adoption of the Final Sustainable Communities Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan.
- Work with media outlets to encourage news coverage in advance of meetings

### **Workshops, Presentations, Hearings**

- Provide for a robust discussion in each county on important issues surrounding how to create a sustainable Bay Area future. Pursuant to state statute, MTC and ABAG will hold a minimum of three public workshops in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, and one or more meetings in the less populous Marin, Napa, Solano and Sonoma counties.
- Host public meetings/workshops in convenient and accessible locations and at a variety of times (evenings, weekends, as well as week days)
- Hold at least three public hearings on the Draft SCS or Alternative Planning Strategy, if one is prepared, which would be held in different parts of the region to maximize the opportunity for participation by members of the public throughout the region.
- Use “visualization” techniques to communicate technical planning issues and strategies to the public, such as maps, videos, graphics, animation or computer simulation to depict alternatives under consideration
- Conduct a public workshop on target-setting methodology (required by SB 375; held March 10, 2010 in the San Francisco Bay Area)
- Provide a summary of comments heard at workshops via [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org)

### **Internet/Social Media**

- Use of a single web address — [www.OneBayArea.org](http://www.OneBayArea.org) — so members of the public have a single place to go to for current updates, and to request to receive notices and information
- Link to OneBayArea website from the individual websites of the regional agencies
- Maintain a library of past workshop meeting materials on the OneBayArea website
- Offer interactive web polls, surveys, etc.
- Provide timely, easy-to-understand information on a website that is accessible, per the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Explore using social media methods to reach and engage residents

### **Media Outlets**

- Issue press releases to media outlets, including ethnic, foreign-language and community media, to keep reporters apprised of progress and generate coverage on radio, television, newspapers and the Internet

- Pursue civic journalism partnerships for high-impact coverage of key issues; conduct media briefings for reporters, including special emphasis to ethnic, foreign-language and community media outlets
- Translate news releases about public workshops into Spanish and Chinese, or other languages as appropriate

### **Outreach to targeted groups**

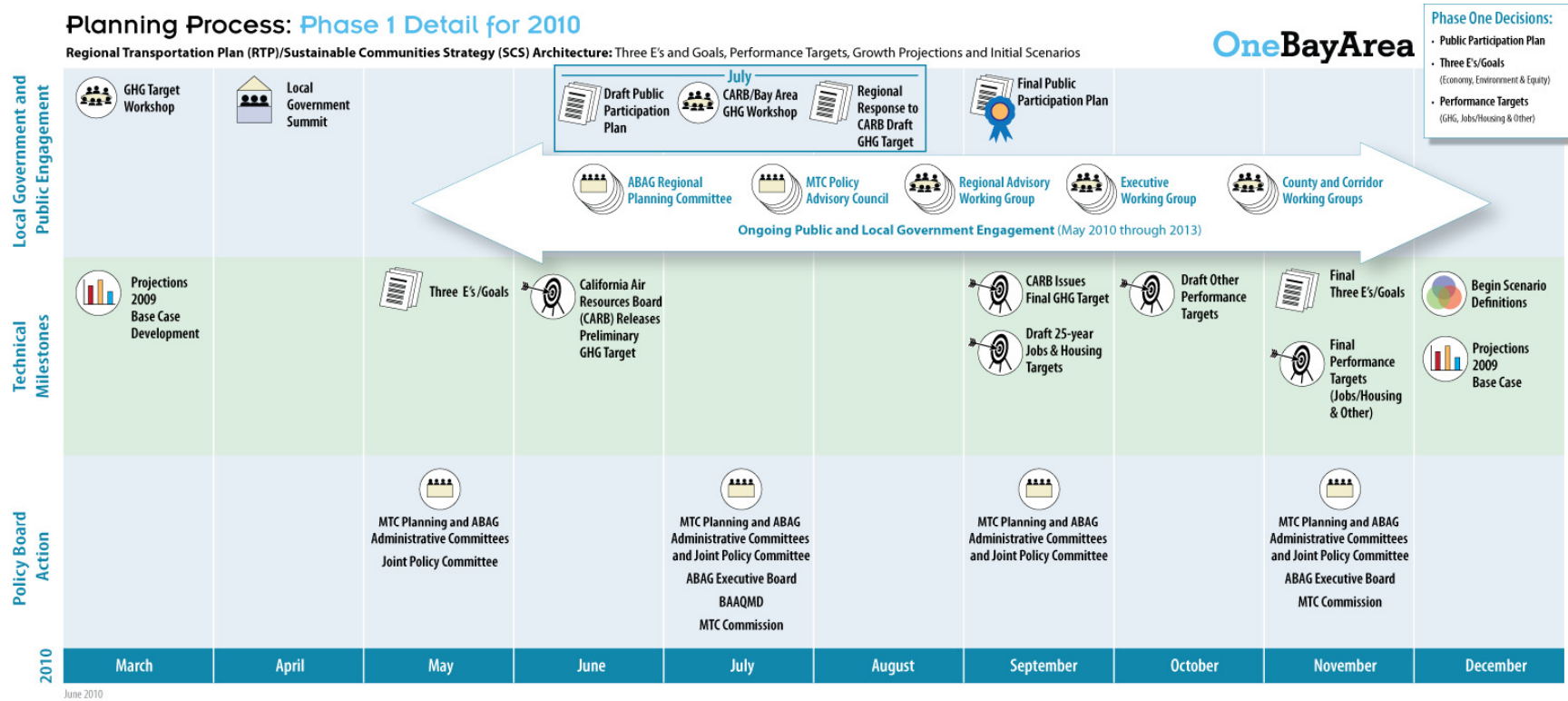
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally under-represented in the planning process, including minority, low-income and limited English proficient communities
- Provide grants to community non-profit organizations in communities of concern for assistance in engaging their residents
- Conduct focus groups targeted at certain stakeholders
- Host roundtable discussion forums periodically to consult with a range of advocacy opinion leaders to discuss key issues, priorities
- Provide assistance, if requested, at least three working days prior to a meeting, to people with disabilities, and language assistance to people with limited English proficiency. (Five or more days' notice is preferred.) Such requests may be made through the MTC Public Information Office at 510-817-5757.
- Piggy-back on existing meetings in order to ensure greater attendance and participation.

### **Other**

- Statistically relevant public opinion poll (also available in languages other than English)



Figure 1: Planning Process Chart



## Phases 2-4

2011



2012



2013



## **VI. Performance Measures for the Sustainable Communities Strategy Public Participation Plan**

MTC and ABAG commit to the following goals and performance benchmarks to measure the effectiveness of the public participation program. The agencies will report on the results in order to inform and improve future outreach and involvement programs, including future updates to the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

### **Public Participation Goals for the 2013 Sustainable Communities Strategy**

1. *Diversity:* Participants must represent a range of socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural, geographic and user (mode) groups. They must also include a range of people with varying interests: social service, business, environment, social justice/equity, etc.
2. *Reach:* The program should make every effort to include the greatest number of people possible. Different levels of participation will make it more inviting for people with a range of involvement preferences to join the discussion.
3. *Accessibility:* Every effort should be made to ensure that anyone who wants to participate can do so. This goal can be met by taking the participation activities to where people already are located, whenever possible. It can also be met by providing ways to participate, regardless of individuals' language, personal mobility or ability to attend a meeting, access to the Web, etc.
4. *Impact:* The feedback received through this Public Participation Plan should be analyzed and provided to policy makers wherever appropriate. Interested participants should be informed of actions by MTC and ABAG. Decisions to not incorporate recommendations should be noted, with a rationale provided and ready to be discussed.
5. *Education:* This outreach program is an opportunity for MTC and ABAG to inform a wide range of people about transportation issues in the Bay Area, as well as the link to climate change and smart growth, among other issues. Each step of the process should include an educational element, whether it is about Bay Area transportation in general, specific projects being considered for inclusion in the long-range plan or background on the outreach results to date.
6. *Participant Satisfaction:* People who take the time and energy to participate should feel it was worth their while to join in the discussion and debate. Questions, surveys or other effort to gather input will be designed to add value to the process and help inform decisions.

MTC staff devised performance measures for the above-identified goals that include quantifiable targets for performance, based on aspirations for meaningful public involvement, tempered by reasonable assumptions and time and budget constraints.

The following targeted performance measures are associated with each of the goals.

#### Diversity

- The demographics of targeted groups (age, ethnicity, income, geographic location, disability) roughly mirror the demographics of the Bay Area's population.
- Participants represent a cross-section of people of various interests, places of residence and primary modes of travel, as reported on evaluation forms distributed at meetings.

#### Reach

- 3,000 or more comments are logged.
- 3,000 individuals actively participate in the Sustainable Communities Strategy public participation efforts as measured by survey responses and meeting attendance (excluding repeat attendance).
- There are 30,000 visits or "views" to the OneBayArea website.
- The Sustainable Communities Strategy or elements of it are mentioned in at least 70 radio or TV broadcasts, newspaper articles, editorials, commentaries, or other printed media.

#### Accessibility

- Meetings are held in all nine counties.
- 100 percent of meeting locations are accessible by transit, if available.
- Meetings are linguistically accessible to 100 percent of participants, with 3 working days' advance request for translation. (Meeting announcements offer translation services with advance request for translation services.)
- All meetings are accessible under the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

#### Impact

- 100 percent of written correspondence received is logged, analyzed, summarized and communicated in time for consideration by staff or policy board members.
- 100 percent of written correspondence is acknowledged so that the person making it knows whether his or her comments are reflected in the outcome of an MTC or ABAG action or, conversely, or why the action was different.

### Education

- 60 percent of participants “*strongly agree or agree*” with statements that indicate that participation in the outreach and involvement efforts was a good opportunity to learn more about Bay Area transportation, land use and housing issues.
  - Educational value of presentations and materials
  - Understanding of other perspectives and differing priorities
  - Clear information on OneBayArea website

### Participant Satisfaction

- 60 percent of participants “*strongly agree or agree*” with statements that rate the 2013 Sustainable Communities Strategy public participation efforts and target the participants’ personal experiences.
  - Sufficient opportunity to comment/ask questions
  - Clear information at an appropriate level of detail
  - Quality of the discussion